

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

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Applicant : Giuseppe SALICE  
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PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Director of the United States Patent  
and Trademark Office  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450

Dear Sir:

Please enter the following amendments before calculation of the filing fee and examination of the merits.

**Amendments to the Specification** begin on page 2 of this paper.

**Amendments to the Claims** begin on page 3 of this paper.

**Amendments to the Abstract** begin on page 5 of this paper.

**Remarks** begin on page 6 of this paper

An **Appendix** including a marked and clean copy of the substitute specification is attached following page 6 of this paper.

**Amendments to the Specification:**

Replace the specification of record with the accompanying substitute specification. A marked-up copy and clean copy are accompanying this amendment. No new matter has been added.

#### Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

#### CLAIMS

1. (Original) A container for gifts or the like, comprising a first half-shell (2) and a second half-shell (4) which can be coupled mouth to mouth to form a closed container (1) suitable for holding the gifts, characterized in that connection means (12, 16; 14, 18) are associated with each of the half-shells (2, 4) and can be mutually engaged in order to keep the two half-shells connected to one another.
2. (Original) A container according to Claim 1, characterized in that, in their mutual engagement position, the connection means (12, 16; 14, 18) connect the two half-shells to one another in a manner such as to permit a limited movement of one half-shell relative to the other in a direction perpendicular to the plane of the mouth.
3. (Currently Amended) A container according to Claim 1 ~~or Claim 2~~, characterized in that the connection means comprise articulation means (20, 20a) which, in the configuration of mutual engagement of the connection means, permit an opening pivoting movement of one half-shell (2) relative to the other half-shell (4).
4. (Currently Amended) A container according to ~~any one of Claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1, characterized in that the connection means are buckle-like connection means comprising a male element (12, 14) integral with the half-shell (2) and a female element (16, 18) integral with the other half-shell.
5. (Original) A container according to Claim 4, characterized in that the male element comprises a flexible tab (14) extending from the periphery of the mouth of one half-shell (2) and provided with an end projection (40), and in which the female element (18) comprises a bridge-like element (18, 54) integral with the side wall of the other half-shell (4), defining a slot (24) in which the projection (40) of the tab (14) can be inserted.
6. (Original) A container according to Claim 4, characterized in that the connection means comprise a male element (12) integral with one half-shell (2) and having a generally anchor-like configuration with resilient anchoring ends (22a and 22b), and a

female element formed by a bridge-like wall (26) defining an open-ended slot (24) in which the male element can be inserted, and in which the anchoring ends (22a, 22b) can engage the walls (28, 30) delimiting the slot.

7. (Original) A container according to Claim 6, characterized in that the male element (12) comprises a pair of substantially parallel, resilient prongs (22) separated by a slot (32), wherein the female element comprises a guide rib (34) which can be inserted in the slot (32) between the prongs, and wherein the female element comprises projecting engagement means (36, 38) which can cooperate with the anchoring ends (22a, 22b) of the prongs (22) to prevent removal of the male element (12) from the female element (16).

8. (Currently Amended) A container according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, characterized in that it comprises means for facilitating the opening of the container, comprising a flexible tab (42) connected to the periphery of the mouth of one of the half-shells (4), the other half shell (2) being capable of being superimposed on the end of the tab in the region of its connection to the respective half-shell, in the closed configuration of the container.

9. (Currently Amended) A container according to ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, further comprising a heat-shrinkable band (52) surrounding the connection region between the two half-shells.

10. (Currently Amended) A package comprising a hollow body including in its interior a container (1) according to ~~any one of Claims 1 to 9~~ claim 1.

11. (Original) A package according to Claim 10, characterized in that the hollow body is a chocolate egg.

**Amendments to the Abstract:**

Please insert the following paragraph as the abstract of the application being filed concurrently herewith.

**ABSTRACT**

A container for gifts or the like, of the type that is used for association with a food package, in particular, to be inserted in a chocolate egg, comprises two half-shells which can be coupled mouth to mouth and with which are associated connection means that can be mutually engaged in order to keep the two half-shells connected to one another; the connection means are preferably of the buckle type with a male element integral with one half-shell and a female element integral with the other half-shell, the male and female elements being mutually engageable.

REMARKS:

The specification and claims has been amended to correct the multiple dependency of the claims and to put the application in better condition for examination. No new matter has been added.

Respectfully submitted,

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